

Message Text

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TAGS: FR, UR, SHUM

SUBJECT: SOVIET DISSIDENT TRIALS-- FRENCH REACTIONS

1. THE SOVIET DISSIDENT TRIALS HAVE PROVOKED AN INDIGNANT REACTION ACROSS THE FRENCH POLITICAL SPECTRUM. THE QUAI D'ORSAY ISSUED A STATEMENT ON JULY 10 EXPRESSING THE "SERIOUS CONCERN" OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND RECALLING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITMENTS OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND THE JOINT FRANCO-SOVIET DECLARATION ON DETENTE SIGNED LAST YEAR BY BREZHNEV AND Giscard. A WIDE VARIETY OF POLITICAL AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS HAVE

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PUBLISHED SIMILAR STATEMENTS.

2. THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) DELIVERED A PROTEST NOTE TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY ASKING THAT SHCHARANSKIY AND GINZBURG BE FREED, AND THAT REPRESSION BE ENDED. THE COMMUNIST DAILY HUMANITE HAS GIVEN THE TRIALS FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT, WITH BOTH A REPORT AND A MAJOR EDITORIAL SIGNED BY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF RENE ANDRIEU. THE EDITORIAL

WAS COUCED IN NOTABLY STRONG AND EVEN SARCASTIC TERMS. IT SAID THAT "NO PROOF OF SHCHARANSKIY'S GUILT HAS BEEN PRESENTED PUBLICLY." ON GINZBURG, THE COMMUNIST PAPER ASKED "IS HE GUILTY ONLY OF HAVING SHOWN HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH THE POLICY OF HIS GOVERNMENT? WE THINK THAT IS HIS RIGHT AS A CITIZEN." ANDRIEU'S EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT, THOUGH THE SOVIETS WERE CERTAINLY THE MASTERS IN THEIR OWN HOUSE, "THERE ARE ALSO UNIVERSAL LAWS FOR WHICH WE ARE FIGHTING AND WHICH WE SHOULD BE FIRST TO RESPECT. AN ACCUSED PERSON, WHOEVER HE MAY BE, SHOULD BE FREE TO CHOOSE HIS LAWYER, AND COURTS SHOULD HOLD THEIR SESSIONS IN THE FULL LIGHT OF DAY." HIS ARTICLE CONCLUDED THAT THE ASPIRATION FOR LIBERTY IS ONE OF THE MOST FORCEFUL IDEAS OF OUR TIME; "A LIBERTY FROM WHICH EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BENEFIT, EVEN THOSE WHO THINK DIFFERENTLY FROM US." AS USUAL, HOWEVER, HUMANITE HEDGED ITS POSITION BY REITERATING THE OVERALL RESPECT THE FRENCH PARTY HAS FOR THE USSR, BY ASSERTING THAT THE US IS NO BETTER PLACED THAN THE USSR TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS AND BY SUGGESTING THAT US MOTIVES IN CRITICIZING THE SOVIETS WERE REALLY TO DELAY THE CONCLUSION OF A SALT AGREEMENT.

3. A PROTEST DEMONSTRATION IN PARIS ON JULY 11 BROUGHT TOGETHER SEVERAL THOUSAND PERSONS IN AN UNUSUALLY BROAD ASSEMBLAGE OF POLITICAL AND LABOR GROUPS, INCLUDING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GAULLISTS, CENTRISTS, SOCIALISTS AND AN OFFICIAL PCF DELEGATION, SHOWING THE UNANIMITY OF FRENCH CONDEMNATION OF THE SOVIET TRIALS.

4. MRS. NATHALIE SHCHARANSKIY ADDED TO THE FRENCH PUBLIC FOCUS ON THE TRIALS BY HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS ON JULY 10 TOGETHER WITH SHCHARANSKIY'S THREE FRENCH LAWYERS. MRS. SHCHARANSKIY ANNOUNCED SHE WOULD ASK TO SEE GISCARD, BUT SHE HAS APPARENTLY NOT PRESSED THIS IDEA. SHE LATER APPEARED AT THE PROTEST DEMONSTRATION.

5. THE ABSENCE OF FRENCH EMBASSY REPS AT THE SITE OF THE TRIALS, IN CONTRAST TO OTHER WESTERN EMBASSIES, HAS BEEN NOTED IN THE PARIS PRESS, BUT THIS POINT HAS NOT ATTRACTED MUCH INTEREST.

6. COMMENT: THE PCF'S STRONG--IF HEDGED--CRITICISM OF THE USSR HAS TWO GOALS: JUMP ON THIS MAJOR PUBLICITY BAND WAGON WHICH HAS WIDE SUPPORT IN THE FRENCH PRESS AND PUBLIC, AND REDUCE THE PARTY'S GROWING STALINIST IMAGE SINCE THE MARCH ELECTIONS BY REVERTING TO ONE OF

THE MAIN THEMES (LIBERTIES) OF ITS TWENTY-SECOND CON-
GRESS.
HARTMAN

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